



**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XG017**

**Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Meeting of the Atlantic  
Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting and webinar/conference call.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS will hold a 3-day Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP) meeting in March 2018. The intent of the meeting is to consider options for the conservation and management of Atlantic HMS. The meeting is open to the public.

**DATES:** The AP meeting and webinar will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 8, and from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Friday, March 9.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Silver Spring Hotel, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The meeting presentations will also be available via WebEx webinar/conference call.

The meeting on Wednesday, March 7, Thursday, March 8, and Friday, March 9, 2018, will also be accessible via conference call and webinar. Conference call and webinar access information are available at:  
*<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/march-2018-hms-advisory-panel-meeting>*.

Participants are strongly encouraged to log/dial in 15 minutes prior to the meeting. NMFS will show the presentations via webinar and allow public comment during identified times on the agenda.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Peter Cooper or Randy Blankinship at (301) 427-8503.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act, Public Law 104-297, provided for the establishment of an AP to assist in the collection and evaluation of information relevant to the development of any FMP or FMP amendment for Atlantic HMS. NMFS consults with and considers the comments and views of AP members when preparing and implementing FMPs or FMP amendments for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks.

The AP has previously consulted with NMFS on: Amendment 1 to the Billfish FMP (April 1999); the HMS FMP (April 1999);

Amendment 1 to the HMS FMP (December 2003); the Consolidated HMS FMP (October 2006); and Amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5a, 5b, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (April and October 2008, February and September 2009, May and September 2010, April and September 2011, March and September 2012, January and September 2013, April and September 2014, March and September 2015, and March, September, and December 2016, and May and September 2017), among other things.

The intent of this meeting is to consider alternatives for the conservation and management of all Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and shark fisheries. We anticipate discussing:

- Domestic implementation of recommendations from the 2017 meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas to include an emergency rule for shortfin mako sharks, Draft Amendment 11 on shortfin mako sharks, bluefin tuna and northern albacore tuna quotas, and issues for 2018;
- Three-year review of Amendment 7 on bluefin tuna management;
- Progress updates on various other rulemakings, including shark fishery closure criteria, evaluation

of existing bluefin tuna management-related gear restricted areas, and evaluation of existing fishing gear modification;

- Recreational fishery issues;
- closed area data collection and an update regarding the exempted fishing permit request to conduct research in pelagic longline closed areas; and
- Updates on shark stock assessments.

We also anticipate inviting other NMFS offices to provide updates, if available, on their activities relevant to HMS fisheries such as listings under the Endangered Species Act and Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Team rulemaking. Finally, we intend to invite other NMFS offices and the United States Coast Guard to provide updates on their activities relevant to HMS fisheries.

Additional information on the meeting and a copy of the draft agenda will be posted prior to the meeting at:  
*<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/march-2018-hms-advisory-panel-meeting>*.

**Special Accommodations**

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Peter Cooper at (301) 427-8503 at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Dated: February 9, 2018.

Emily H. Menashes,  
Acting Director,  
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National Marine Fisheries Service.

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